

Style Guide (based on Sam Dragga's TE course)

The major project for this course is designed to be a substantive indicator of your editing abilities. The professional nature and quality of this document should make it suitable for inclusion in a portfolio that you might bring with you to a job interview. You are responsible for finding a suitable project. I recommend a client on campus who creates documents in-house. I will be happy to advise you.

Compose a detailed style guide for a public or private organization. Examine the existing publications of this organization and determine what kind of style advice you would give to writers who wish to write effectively within this organization. Analyze the diction, grammar, and punctuation that compose the "style" of this organization. (If your organization has a style guide, a substantial revision of the existing guide is permissible.)

In designing your guide, consider the principles of good document design. Analyze your audience's language expertise and attitudes toward the topics you will cover. Try to make your guide self-explanatory and self-contained: while you might wish to include a list of references, avoid continually referring your readers to other style manuals or usage guides. Keep the guide simple and concise: focus on the particular document or documents that the organization produces. Address such issues as the following (please note, this is not a comprehensive list):

- hyphenation
- biased language
- foreign languages
- tables of contents
- indexes
- punctuation
- italics
- capitalization
- headings
- abbreviations
- numbers
- spelling
- tables and figures
- captions

Provide examples for each of the style issues you cover.

The purpose, audience, organization, and scope of your project will vary; however, unless I give you a written exemption, your style guide must have the following features:

- real project for a real client or user (no hypothetical situations)
- access to subject specialists as sources of information
- access to representative users for field testing
- appropriately written, illustrated, and designed for maximum usability

In an accompanying memo of at least 2 pages, explain your project and justify your coverage of style.